

Who They Are

Founded in 2004, ZipServers provides hosting services for customers that range in size from independent web developers to small and medium-sized businesses. Its growing portfolio of services includes:

- Dedicated hosting
- Shared hosting
- Virtual Private Server hosting
- Server management
- Web site building tools

Besides its core hosting business, ZipServers also operates three subsidiary divisions: ZipHosters (personal web and mail hosting), ZipXtreme (hosting solutions tailored for online gaming), and ZipSupport (online customer services that support all other ZipServers divisions).

Rather than shoulder the cost of building and managing its own data center infrastructure, ZipServers applies its expertise to leverage third-party data center services to create advanced solutions and offer cost-effective management that its customers would not be able to develop or typically could not afford. The ZipServers team draws from a combined 50 years of experience in the hosting industry to ensure customers the highest level of support and superior performance.

This “customer-first” focus, as well as a commitment to keeping prices at a level small to medium-sized businesses can afford, has led to an exceptional growth plane. In five short years, ZipServers’ customer base has grown to more than 1,000 from more than 30 countries.

As the worldwide hosting service market becomes increasingly competitive, ZipServers is actively developing products and services that will extend its customers new advantages while maintaining the ideal balance of capabilities, reliability, and cost-effectiveness.

Challenge

ZipServers wanted to create a Virtual Private Server (VPS) hosting service that was fully automated and highly secure.

“So many other VPS hosting products out there really showed us what we didn’t want ours to be,” said Charles Nix, Director of Marketing for ZipServers. “Ours had to have stronger security. When we looked at competing VPS solutions, we found countless vulnerabilities. We would never present our customers an option with so much risk. We insisted our solution would give every VPS complete isolation.”

ZipServers — At A Glance

Company
ZipServers

Location
Oklahoma City, OK

URL
www.zipservers.com

Industry
Web Hosting

Profile
A hosting service provider delivering managed, unmanaged, dedicated, shared, and virtual private server hosting.

Challenge
Wanted to create a fully automated, Virtual Private Server (VPS) hosting service.

Solution
Leveraged SoftLayer data center services and Parallels® solutions to build a dynamic, on-demand VPS offering.

■ Challenge (cont.)

ZipServers also needed to make sure that its VPS solution would be easy to manage—for customers, of course, but also for its internal team. “The scalability that VPS can provide is exceptional. In fact, many organizations that don’t think they need additional scalability end up developing very exciting ways to use it, with enormous benefits, once they realize the opportunities,” said Nix. “But our human resources can’t ever be as scalable as these systems. We knew we needed to develop a solution that is as automated as possible, so that our customers can scale up and down at will without causing enormous changes in support requirements on our side.”

■ Solution and Results

ZipServers selected SoftLayer™ on-demand data center services and Parallels virtualization technology to create a dynamic, on-demand VPS hosting service. The service deploys Parallels Virtuozzo containers on SoftLayer dedicated servers, integrating SoftLayer’s open API, fully automated services, and Virtual Private Network into a seamless solution that is easy to use, cost-effective, and secure.

“SoftLayer and Parallels were the right partners for what we wanted to accomplish,” said Nix. “SoftLayer’s portfolio, fully-automated model, and open API, in conjunction with Parallels software gave us the exact toolbox and materials we needed.”

ZipServers’ VPS hosting service leverages SoftLayer’s automation to extend customers greater control, more options, and sustainable performance for their virtual environment. Reloads, backups, and control are available via control panel, as is the ability to upgrade service without human intervention. The virtual server environments have access to SoftLayer’s full-range of products and services, including network-attached storage. When ZipServers recycles its hardware annually (so as to always run on the latest, more powerful equipment), customers experience no downtime; their VPS environments migrate “live” between physical servers.

SoftLayer’s automation and Parallels tools simplify ZipServers’ own operations. “We’ve integrated Plesk billing and many of SoftLayer’s other automated backend services,” said Nix. “It makes our VPS service almost as easy for us to provide as it is for our customers to use.”

ZipServers’ VPS also gives customers completely isolated environments, thanks to the security of the Parallels Virtuozzo solution and SoftLayer’s Virtual Private Network. “I can’t say enough about the security that we’re able to build in,” said Nix. “With the Virtual Private Network, our customers can manage their environments in total security, and network their virtual machines with un-metered inter-VPS bandwidth. They get free SSL, and PPTP is available as well.”

Choosing SoftLayer and Parallels helped ZipServers develop the product that they hoped for, with multiple short-term and long-term benefits. “SoftLayer and Parallels gave us a headstart. We didn’t have to find ways to automate every aspect of our solution or shore up security challenges. All of that was already done for us,” said Nix. “Instead, we were able to focus our energy on how we wanted to bring it all together. That saved us a lot in development time and cost, and continues to save us in operations costs on an ongoing basis.”

■ About SoftLayer

Headquartered in Plano, Texas, SoftLayer delivers world-class, on-demand virtual data center services on a global basis from facilities located in Dallas, TX; Seattle, WA; and Washington, D.C. SoftLayer integrates all facets of IT to innovate industry-leading solutions that are fully automated. This empowers customers with complete control, security, scalability, and ease-of-management for their IT environment. For more information please visit www.softlayer.com or call 866.398.7638.